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34924

**GOETHE AND THE ROMANTICISTS IN THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS SHAKESPEARE**

by

**CAROLINE PAULINE BARBARA SCHOCH**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

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## INTRODUCTION.

The generous contributions made by Goethe and the Romanticists to Shakespearean material through translations, critical essays, letters, lectures, conversations, novels, dramas and poems, and the lively interest these writers took in the great English poet, each seeking early to discover the nature and scope of Shakespeare's genius and later to interpret him in the light of the views each held as to the art of the great dramatist, no doubt prompted Gundolf to make the following statement: "Wie jeder zum Leben stand, so stand er zu Shakespeare. Darum versuchte jeder mit seinem Shakespeare die ihm verhassten Gegner zu vernichten. So spielten ihn die Romantiker gegen Schiller, Schiller gegen Iffland und Kotzebue, Kotzebue gegen die Romantik und Goethe später gegen die Romantik aus. Darum ist nicht nur unsere Dichtung in dem Masse bereichert und erweitert worden als immer neue Gebiete in Shakespeare urbar wurden, sondern er hat gleichzeitig unsere Kritik, Aesthetik und Historie mittelbar und unmittelbar geweckt, indem jeder im Parteienkampf aus ihm seine Waffen holte, an ihm sie wetzte und prüfte. (Gundolf p.338)

The "Parteienkampf" referred to is found summarized in Goethe's conversation with S.Boisserée (1815). When the latter expressed his reverence for the unity in the works of the Greeks, Goethe replied, " . . . . nehmen wir Calderon, Shakespeare dagegen; diesem letztern fehlt die Einheit; er war von seiner Zeit abhängig, so gut wie jeder, die Schlegel mögen sagen, was sie wollen. Shakespeare ist mehr episch und philosophisch als dramatisch." (Gespräche II.p.344). Again in 1825 he says to Eckermann, however with more toleration, "Die Shakespeareschen Stücke gehen über die Einheit der Zeit und des Ortes so weit hinaus als nur möglich; aber sie sind fasslich, es ist nichts fasslicher als sie, und deshalb würden auch die Griechen sie untadelig finden." (Gespräche III."162).

Joachimi-Dege says of the Romanticists' efforts, "Nirgends zeigt sich



die Romantik von einer liebenswürdigeren Seite, als wo sie als Dolmetsch von Shakespeares Poesie, als Verkünderin seiner künstlerischen Grösse und als Interpretation seiner technischen Meisterschaft Worte findet." (P.131).

Again she says of the Romanticists' view, "Shakespeare ist kein Natursinger sondern K'instler. Er muss als solcher aufgefasst und studiert werden." (P.132).

Even though the object for study be the quintessence of literary greatness, nevertheless a romanticist's point of view must differ from that of a classicist with regard to ideals of form. Hence, in whatever other respects the views of Goethe and the Romanticists may have coincided with regard to Shakespeare, the above quotations indicate that a marked difference of opinion existed concerning their ideas of Shakespeare as a dramatic artist.



# GOETHE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SHAKESPEARE.

Goethe's introduction to Shakespeare goes back to his student days in Leipsic. Here Dodd's "Beauties of Shakespeare" furnished the youth with that kind of delight which one experiences when forcibly struck by new impressions. The Shakespearean peculiarities, the great speeches, the fine descriptions and the humorous elements found in this inadequate volume caused Goethe even in his sixties to recall with pleasure these early readings.

(Werke vol.24 pp.55-56) With equal appreciation he speaks of his introduction to Shakespeare through Wieland's translation which appeared from 1762 to 1766 and of the pleasure he took in calling the attention of his friends and acquaintances to these new dramas. Such was the acquaintance that Goethe had with Shakespeare when he came to Strassburg in 1770. In the autumn of that year Herder arrived in that city and through him Goethe grasped, for the first time, the unique significance of the great English poet. Very soon he found himself with his coterie of friends studying Shakespeare in the original, translating passages and juggling with his puns. That he and his friends discussed concerning the great poet, Goethe says may be found in Herder's essay on Shakespeare in his "Blätter von deutscher Art und Kunst" and in Lenz's "Anmerkungen übers Theater." Of the new experience he says, "Ich hatte ihn (Shakespeare) mit grossem Enthusiasmus ergriffen. Ein freudiges Bekennen, dass etwas Höheres über mir schwebte, war ansteckend für meine Freunde, die sich alle dieser Sinnesart hingaben." (Werke vol.24 p.57)

At Sesenheim the young student had won the admiration of the Brion family by his skill in reading aloud. And so, during their visit at Strassburg, we find the daughter of Pastor Brion exciting the interest of their city friends in this art of the young poet, who, upon their request to entertain them thus, reads to them in a single evening the whole of Hamlet with all the





passion and all the expression of which an enthusiastic youth is capable  
(Werke vol.24 p.28)

One of the ideas championed by Herder was that poetry and language are one in their origin, and hence a universal gift of nature and that therefore poetry necessarily stands higher the nearer the poet stands to nature. (Bielschowsky I pp.113-114). It was this thought which caused Goethe to understand the genius of Shakespeare and thereby to find himself by becoming conscious of his own creative powers. He realized for the first time, that, if left to the spontaneous expression of his innermost soul, he, too, might be a star in the literary universe, giving its own light, rather than a satellite, reflecting light artificially produced by French rules of poetic art.

Desirous that the literary world of Germany be introduced to Shakespeare in the light of Herder's interpretation, the young enthusiast prepares a speech called "Zum Shakespeare Tag" to be delivered on the fourteenth of October, 1771, a day to which, according to the Protestant calendar, the name of "William" is assigned.

As to actual content, it is interesting to note that Herder in his essay on Shakespeare, which appeared in 1773, makes practically the same points that Goethe does in this address, yet the two writings differ greatly as to spirit, for what Herder, the doctrinaire of evolutionary history sees objectively, Goethe feels subjectively. His are the words of an inspired "genius ignited by a genius" (Lessing 17.Lit.Brief), and the speech represents decidedly the storm and stress conception of Shakespeare. "Die erste Seite," he says, "die ich in ihm las, machte mich auf zeitlebens ihm eigen, und wie ein Blindgeborener, dem eine Wunderhand das Gesicht in einem Augenblick schenkt. Ich erkannte, ich fühlte aufs lebhafteste meine Existenz um eine Unendlichkeit erweitert; alles war mir neu, unbekannt, und das ungewohnte Licht machte mir Augenschmerzen. Nach und nach lernte ich sehen, und Dank sei meinem erkenntlichen Genius, ich fühle noch immer lebhaft, was ich gewonnen



habe." (Werke, vol.36 p.4)

Goethe emphasizes first of all the superior individuality of Shakespeare, comparing him with a wanderer wearing seven-mile boots. In two strides this individual genius accomplishes as much as another in a day's journey. "Wir ehren", he says, "das Andenken des grössten Wanderers und tun uns dadurch selbst eine Ehre an. Von Verdiensten, die wir zu schätzen wissen, haben wir den Keim in uns." (Ibid.)

Secondly, he urges Shakespearean freedom of form. The three unities are fetters which must be broken for they hem the imagination and restrain the heart and soul. He describes his own feeling upon being released from these restrictions as follows: "Ich sprang in die freie Luft und fühlte erst, dass ich Hände und Füsse hatte." (Ibid.)

Thirdly, he points out the historical development of poetic art, recognizing both the simple, harmonious character of Greek art and the complex, vibrant character of Shakespearean art. Of the latter he says, "Shakespeares Theater ist ein schöner Raritäten Kasten, in dem die Geschichte der Welt vor unsern Augen an dem unsichtbaren Faden der Zeit vorbeiwallt. Seine Plane sind, nach dem gemeinen Stil zu reden, gar keine Plane, aber seine Stücke drehen sich alle um den geheimen Punkt, in dem das Eigentümliche unsres Ichs, die prätendierte Freiheit unsres Willens mit dem notwendigen Gang des Ganzen zusammenstösst." (Pp.5-6)<sup>1)</sup>

Fourthly, he sees a true expression of nature in Shakespeare, especially in his characters, when he cries out, "Natur, Natur! Nichts so Natur als Shakespeares Menschen! (P.6)

Lastly, he recognizes the universality and creative spirit of Shakespeare's genius by saying, "Er wetteiferte mit dem Prometheus, bildete ihm

1) Cf. Herder when he speaks of "einer einzelnen Hauptempfindung, die jedes Stück beherrscht, und wie eine Weltseele durchströmt." (Herders Werke Bd.5, S.224)



Zug vor Zug seine Menschen nach, nur in kolossalischer Grösse und dann belebte er sie alle mit dem Hauch seines Geistes, er redet aus allen und man erkennt ihre Verwandtschaft." (Ibid)

Goethe, as a young genius, naturally seeks to apply these individual features of Shakespeare in his own creative productions. His innate passion for everything "original, powerful, great, peculiar and popular" as opposing all that is "forced, set to rules, fastidious, and artificial"<sup>1)</sup> caused him to reach out into all domains for figures expressing individual force. Thus, we find him planning tremendous dramas with overtowering figures such as, Julius Caesar, as a statesman of titanic greatness; Mahomet, as the creator of a great religion; Socrates, as a heroic, philosophic spirit; and Prometheus, as a creator with defiant power. (Werke, vol. 15, pp. 335-336) In attempting to carry out these plans, however, he proves unsuccessful. But when he turns to the products peculiar to the soil of his own country, he finds a "Kraftnatur", — a striking individuality that had opposed and succumbed to the existing state of affairs in the figure of Goetz von Berlichingen. In 1771, shortly after the "Rede zum Shakespeare Tag", he fashions the history of Goetz in ununified, undramatic, biographical form.

The loose structure of this work shows that Goethe followed Herder's idea when he saw in Shakespeare not so much the tragic poet as one who vivified history, (Werke, vol. 36, p. 304), but when Herder writes Goethe that Shakespeare had spoiled him one can glean from Goethe's answer that he felt the need of inner form, for he says, "Es muss eingeschmolzen, von Schlacken gereinigt werden" (Letter to Herder, July 1772) He realized that he "out-shakespeared" Shakespeare and explains this in "Dichtung und Wahrheit" when he says, "Durch die fortdauernde Teilnahme an Shakespeares Werken hatte ich mir den Geist so ausgeweitet, dass mir der enge Bühnenraum und die kurze,

1) Cf. Friedrich Paulsen, "Goethes aesthetische Anschauungen", in Goethe Jahrbuch XXIII 14.



einer Vorstellung zugemessene Zeit keineswegs hinlänglich schienen, um etwas Bedeutendes vorzutragen." (Werke, vol. 24, p. 148). Goethe's revision of Goetz (1773) appears almost simultaneously with Herder's essay on Shakespeare, in which the latter calls Shakespeare ~~Phocles~~ 'brother'. Thus, both Herder and Goethe realized that the Shakespearean drama is more than a mere "Raritäten-Kasten."

Goethe's next judgment of Shakespeare occurs in "Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre." Here the Shakespearean element is an inherent part of the plot of the novel. His attitude in this work takes on a transitional aspect, for it reflects not only the buoyant spirit of the early Storm and Stress days but also points toward the definite stand he takes after 1811.

Goethe once described Wilhelm Meister to Herder as being a pseudo-confession. (Theatralische Sendung, ed. by Harry Maync, p. XV). This remark can easily be traced as correct with special reference to the Shakespearean material contained in the work. In the first place, Wilhelm becomes acquainted with Shakespeare through Jarno in very much the same way as Goethe learned to know him through Herder. The enthusiasm with which he describes the joy and interest that he experiences in reading Shakespeare, as well as the gratitude he pours out to Jarno for calling his attention to the English dramatist is a beautiful tribute both to Shakespeare and to Herder.

As in the "Rede" of 1771 he gives vent to his feelings over the novel world revealed by Shakespeare. Though his mode of expression is slightly more composed than in his earlier speech nevertheless it is full of wholesome exuberance. Thus Wilhelm feels that no person, no book, no occurrence in his life has ever stirred his soul so deeply as these precious works. He sees in them the products of a "heavenly genius"; the surging waves of a live universe; strength, tenderness, power, rest, — all combine and work on his spirit. He says of the Shakespearean characters, "Diese geheimnisvollsten und zusammen-





gesetztesten Geschöpfe der Natur handeln vor uns in seinen Stücken, als wenn sie Uhren wären, deren Zifferblatt und Gehäuse man von Kristall gebildet hätte; sie zeigen nach ihrer Bestimmung den Lauf der Stunden an, und man kann zugleich das Räder- und Federwerk erkennen, das sie treibt." (Werke, vol. 17, p. 222) Wilhelm also reveals that his soul is ignited by a great spirit, when he says, "Diese wenigen Blicke, die ich in Shakespeares Welt getan, reizen mich mehr als irgend etwas anders, in der wirklichen Welt schnellere Fortschritte zu tun." (Ibid)

From this point Goethe's subsequent interest in Shakespeare takes on a different aspect. After having read the plays with burning interest and having caught the significance of their originality and the scope of the bigness of the Shakespearean world, he turns first to an analytical study of the character of Hamlet, and then through Serlo's influence to a study of the structure with reference to a revision of the play.

The critical, psychological study of Hamlet which Goethe makes is the first German contribution of its kind to Shakespeare scholarship. The various ways by which Wilhelm attacks the study of Hamlet's character, the clear analysis which he submits to his audience and the general estimate which he finally makes of Hamlet's problematical nature, — all this goes to show that Goethe's interest in Shakespeare had changed from enthusiastic admiration to that of deep and serious study of the great poet.

According to Creizenach this analysis of Hamlet was the result of a penetrating Hamlet study in which Goethe had apparently been engaged from 1785 to 1786. (Werke, vol. 17, p. 346). A comparison of the Shakespearean material contained in the "Theatralische Sendung" (1777-1785) with that in the "Lehrjahre" goes to show that he had completed this study by 1785. The "Theatralische Sendung" consists of six books, the "Lehrjahre" of eight. That part of the material concerning Shakespeare which extends through the first four books of the "Lehrjahre" is practically identical with that in the



"Urmeister". This extends to the point where Serlo discusses the plan of structure, insinuating that the last two acts of the play are but loosely connected to the foregoing ones and that the main interest ceases with the third act. To this Wilhelm takes exception saying, "Ich bin weit entfernt, dem Plan dieses Stückes zu tadeln, ich glaube vielmehr, dass kein grösserer ersonnen worden sei; ja er ist nicht ersonnen, er ist so! Der Held hat keinen Plan, aber das Stück ist planvoll." (Werke, vol. 17, p. 297) This is the same idea as expressed in the speech of 1771 (cf. vol. 36, pp. 5-6). Here the analogy of the Shakespearean material of the "Lehrjahre" and the "Urmeister" ceases. The additional material belongs to the years from 1785 to 1796 and reveals Goethe's change of attitude toward dramatic form and structure. However, he does not take a definite position as to the need of revision for stage purposes, but rather shows a hesitating attitude influenced partly by his Storm and Stress idea of intuitive feeling for inner form,<sup>1)</sup> and partly by his classicist's idea of simple, harmonious unity. The following discussion of this point as brought out in the novel will show that he assumes this change with a marked degree of reservation.

At first Wilhelm is unwilling to sacrifice the structure as Shakespeare developed it. His aversion to radical changes in Hamlet may be compared to Goethe's attitude toward changes in Julius Caesar when it was being prepared for the Weimar stage in 1803. At this time he expressed a doubt as to the wisdom of disturbing the structure too much. He was satisfied with simplifying a few scenes and adding some verses. (Wahle, Schriften der Goethe-Gesellschaft, vol. 6, p. 244)

And so, too, when Serlo suggests to Wilhelm that he cut the play, Goethe says, "Wilhelm befand sich noch in den glücklichsten Zeiten, da man nicht begreifen kann, dass an einem geliebten Mädchen, an einem verehrten

1) See Goethe's article: "Von deutscher Baukunst" (1772) Werke, vol. 33, pp. 7-10; also his remarks in the "Anhang zu Mercier-Wagners Neuem Versuch über Schauspielkunst". (1775) Werke, vol. 36, p. 116.



Schriftsteller irgend etwas mangelhaft sein könnte." (Werke vol.18 p.17) And of Serlo he says, "Serlo, hingegen, sonderte gern und beinahe zu viel; sein scharfer Verstand wollte in einem Kunstwerke gewöhnlich nur ein mehr oder weniger unvollkommenes Ganzes erkennen. Er glaubte, so wie man die Stücke finde, habe man wenig Ursache, mit ihnen so gar bedächtigt umzugehen, und so musste auch Shakespeare, so musste besonders Hamlet vieles leiden." (Ibid.) Wilhelm, however, is not willing to dispense with any part of the play, for to him it is "chaff and wheat" intermingled. He sees in it, "Aeste, Zweige, Blätter, Knospen, Blüten und Früchte," and says, "Ist nicht eins mit dem andern und durch das andere?" To which Serlo retorts: "Man bringe nicht den ganzen Stamm auf den Tisch, der Künstler müsse goldene Äpfel in silbernen Schalen seinen Gästen reichen." (Werke, vol.18 pp.17-18) Just as Wilhelm speaks here, so did Goethe express himself in 1772 in connection with Sulzer's revision of Cymbeline when he declared himself against those who wanted "das Gold von Schlacken (zu) scheiden." (Werke vol.36 pp.26-27)

After minuter examination of the play and riper consideration of Serlo's suggestion: Wilhelm changes his mind concerning the structure and decides that the great inner relation of the two cannot be improved upon and must not be disturbed; certain elements, though, he considers external to the main action and these can be sacrificed for a stage presentation. However, these external elements he considers good and valuable for a novel. Wilhelm then sets to work thus: "Er fing an, nach seinem Plane auszuheben, einzuschieben, zu trennen und zu verbinden, zu verändern und oft wieder herzustellen; denn so zufrieden er auch mit seiner Idee war, so schien ihm doch bei der Ausführung immer, dass das Original nur verdorben werde." (Werke vol.18 p.23) Thus we see a conflict in his mind as to the justification of the alterations. Finally, however, he decides that certain elements in the play would appear natural to a British audience, but would cause confusion to a German one. And so both agree to the simpler background as more suitable for the German



The mature Goethe's reverence for classic form in the drama and his experience as director of the theatre at Weimar naturally caused him to study Shakespeare from two standpoints; namely, the drama as suitable for the stage of his day and the drama as work of poetic art to be appreciated as such.

The demand made by the Romanticists and especially by Tieck for the Shakespearean play to be presented in its entirety was the reason for Goethe's writing his critical essay entitled, "Shakespeare und kein Ende". This essay is divided into three parts, the first two of which were written in 1815, the last part in 1816.

In the first part entitled: "Shakespeare als Dichter überhaupt", he first points out the ability of the true poet to express his innermost thoughts and to give to the reader a heightened consciousness of the world. Shakespeare had such power and no one viewed the world as clearly as he did. But Shakespeare's world is so rich and varied that it contains too much for the physical eye to see, - it must be observed through the mind. This sort of vision appeals to the imagination, and, by enlivening this faculty a complete effect of the Shakespearean drama can be obtained. Hence, he says, "Er lässt geschehen was sich leicht imaginieren lässt, ja was besser imaginiert als gesehen wird." (Werke, vol. 37, p. 38) Moreover, Goethe feels that Shakespeare is most effective through the oral word and therefore, to enjoy him most one should listen with closed eyes to a skillful reader. In this way, the presentation of the play can be imagined, and the lesser character will oft times be much more effective than the main ones. This view is by no means an adverse criticism of Shakespeare, but rather an admission of his unusual, inexhaustive world. "Shakespeares Dichtungen", he says, "sind ein grosser belebter Jahrmarkt und diesen Reichtum hat er seinem Vaterlande zu danken." <sup>1)</sup> (Werke vol. 37, p. 40) No greater compliment could be added than is contained in the following: "Schwerlich wird man einen Dichter finden, dessen einzelnen Werken jedesmal

1) This same idea is embodied in his "Reise zum Shakespeare Tag" when he compares Shakespeare's world with a "Raritäten Kasten". (See above p. 11)





ein anderer Begriff zu Grunde liegt und im Ganzen wirksam ist, wie an den seinig<sup>en</sup> sich nachweisen lässt." (Werke vol.37, p.40)

From this discussion he proceeds to the second part of the essay entitled: "Shakespeare, verglichen mit den Alten und Neusten." Here he first engages in an abstract discussion of "Sollen" and "Wollen", an antithesis which he applies to the foundation of ancient dramatic art as opposed to that of the modern. The ancient tragedy rests upon the disproportion between "Sollen" and the achievement, whereas the modern poetry rests upon the disproportion of "Wollen" and achievement. This is the chasm between the two kinds of art. The tragedy becomes great and strong through restraint or "Sollen", but weak and small through inclination or "Wollen". Shakespeare, according to Goethe, combines the two: "Sollen und Wollen suchen sich durchaus in seinen Stücken ins Gleichgewicht zu setzen; beide bekämpfen sich mit Gewalt, doch immer so, dass das Wollen im Nachteile bleibt." (Werke vol.37 p.44)

Thus, Shakespeare does not belong to the Romanticists so much as to the Ancients. Goethe, indeed, sees in Hamlet, Macbeth and Brutus the will to go beyond their powers, but since Shakespeare does not let his desire come from within the individual, but rather from some outward cause, such as the ghost, the witches and Lady Macbeth, and the friends of Brutus, therein his work approaches the ancient drama.

The third part entitled: "Shakespeare als Theaterdichter" was written decidedly in the form of a protest against the Romanticists' plea to play Shakespeare without an iota of omission. To Goethe Shakespeare's name and his merits belong to <sup>the</sup> history of poetry rather than to the history of the theatre. He thinks that theatrical effects meant little to Shakespeare, but that his works give full play to the intellect and are only theatrical in the sense that they call forth one's innermost sentiments and thoughts. Even though the stage is the world in Shakespeare, yet his whole method of procedure has something repugnant to the stage. He says, "Sein grosses Talent ist das eines Epitomators,



und da der Dichter überhaupt als Epitomator der Natur erscheint, so müssen wir auch hier Shakespeares grosses Verdienst anerkennen, nur leugnen wir dabei, und zwar zu seinen Ehren, dass die Bühne ein würdiger Raum für sein Genie gewesen." (Werke v. 37, p. 47).

For the stage Goethe advises the curtailing of the plays and he holds the revisions of Schroeder as praiseworthy because he fears that Shakespeare will lose ground in Germany if it be insisted that he be presented without such revisions as produce greater dramatic effect.

This was Goethe's attitude when he revised "Romeo and Juliet" in 1811-1812. In this revision he directed his attention to the relation of the lovers and their tragic fate, he curtailed the comical elements and added lyrical touches. Of this work Goethe wrote Reinhard in 1812: "Diese Arbeit war ein grosses Studium für mich; und ich habe wohl niemals dem Shakespeare tiefer in sein Talent hineingeblickt, aber <sup>er</sup> wie alles Letzte, bleibt denn doch unergründlich. (Schriften der Goethe-Gesell. VI. 246)

In his "Maximen und Reflexionen" Goethe says in 1822, "Shakespeares trefflichsten Theatorstücken mangelt es hier und da an Fazilität; sie sind etwas mehr, als sie sein sollten, und eben deshalb deuten sie auf den grossen Dichter." (Werke vol. 38 p. 268) and in 1826 he tells Eckermann that Shakespeare's times made no demands of the stage. Everybody was satisfied to imagine the setting. However, he could never have satisfied the theater of Louis XIV. or of the court of Madrid. Yet he feels that even though he has been lost to us as a theatrical poet we nevertheless have gained him as a poet in general.

In connection with Goethe's attitude as revealed in his critical essay "Shakespeare und kein Ende", especially with reference to his opposition to Tieck's demand that not an iota be omitted in the presentation of a Shakespearean play, it must be noted that in 1826 he expressly retracted his view of 1816. Thus he says, "Wenn ich vor zehn Jahren der entgegengesetzten Meinung war und mehr als einen Versuch machte, nur das eigentlich Wirkende aus den



Shakespeareschen Stücken auszuwählen, das Störende aber und Umherschweifende abzulehnen, so hatte ich, als einem Theater vorgesetzt, ganz Recht; denn ich hatte mich und die Schauspieler monatelang, gequält und zuletzt doch nur eine Vorstellung erreicht, welche unterhielt und in Verwunderung setzte, aber sich wegen der gleichsam nur einmal zu erfüllenden Bedingung auf dem Repertoire nicht erhalten konnte. Jetzt aber kann es ~~war~~ ganz angenehm sein, dass dergleichen hie und da abermals versucht wird; denn auch das Mislingen bringt im Ganzen keinen Schaden." (Werke vol. 38 p. 21)

The greatest virtue of these experiments, (namely, to carry out Tieck's ideas) is that they serve to re-establish in the present a great and departed past. Hence, he says, "Da der Mensch doch einmal die Sehnsucht nicht los werden soll, so ist es heilsam, wenn sie sich nach einem bestimmten Objekte hin richtet, wenn sie sich bestrebt, ein abgeschiedenes grosses Vergangenes ernst und harmlos in der Gegenwart wieder darzustellen. Nun sind Schauspieler so gut wie Dichter und Leser in dem Falle, nach Shakespeare hinzublicken und durch ein Bemühen nach Unerreichbarem ihre eigenen innern, wahrhaft natürlichen Fähigkeiten aufzuschliessen." (Ibid)

In later life Goethe occasionally, though very rarely, expressed himself with some degree of indulgence concerning Shakespeare, — as, when for instance, in "Dichtung und Wahrheit" he says, "Wir (die Deutschen) haben ihm alle Gerechtigkeit, Billigkeit und Schonung.....reichlich zugewendet,..... und ich habe jeder Zeit was man zu seiner Ehre, zu seinen Gunsten, ja ihn zu entschuldigen gesagt, gern unterschrieben." (Werke vol. 24 p. 55) Nevertheless it is wrong to characterize his last period of Shakespeare criticism, after about 1813, as A. Brandl does, as "Verdruss über Shakespeares Unkunst und Ungeheuerlichkeit". (Goethe-Jahrbuch vol. 21 p. 91) From the time that Goethe identified himself with the Storm and Stress Movement, through his classical period and up to his ripe old age he looked upon Shakespeare sincerely and consistently



as a superior genius, poet, and master; worthy of the highest exaltation and the deepest reverence.

In 1771 he would have been glad to play the minor role of Pylades beside Shakespeare as Orestes; (Werke vol.36 p.5) in 1775 to F.L. Graf von Stolberg he says that Shakespeare belongs to the things about which one can not talk, — at least over which one cannot dispute. (Gespräche vol.1, p.39) In comparing Shakespeare with Calderon (1802) he says, "Shakespeare reicht uns im Gegenteil die volle, reife Traube vom Stock; wir mögen sie nun beliebig Beere für Beere geniessen, sie auspressen, keltern, als Most, als gegorenen Wein kosten oder schlürfen, auf jede Weise sind wir erquickt." (Werke vol.37 p.214) In a conversation with Eckermann in 1824 he says it is as absurd to compare Tieck with him — Goethe — as it would be for him to compare himself with Shakespeare whom he calls a being of higher order to which he looks up and whom he reveres. (Gespräche vol.3 p.95) Again, in looking over a book containing copper prints of Shakespeare's works in 1825 he says to Eckermann, "Da wird man erst gewahr, wie unendlich reich und gross Shakespeare ist! Da ist doch kein Motiv des Menschenlebens, das er nicht dargestellt und ausgesprochen hätte. Und alles mit welcher Leichtigkeit und Freiheit! Er ist unvergleichlich!" (Gespräche vol.3 p.246) And finally he expresses his debt of gratitude to his master in the poem, "Zwischen beiden Welten" published in 1820, when he says:

"Lida!<sup>1)</sup> Glück der nächsten Nähe,  
Wilhelm! Stern der schönsten Höhe,  
Euch verdank ich, was ich bin." (Werke vol.I p.220)

1) Reference to Frau von Stein.





## AUGUST WILHELM SCHLEGEL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SHAKESPEARE.

### I. "Etwas über Shakespeare bei Gelegenheit Wilhelm Meisters."

The first part of Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" appeared in 1795. In October 1796 the last book was made accessible to the public. Even before the publication of this last book August Wilhelm Schlegel contributed to the April number of Schiller's "Horen" an essay of rather peculiar character, as far as the relation of its content to its title is concerned, — called "Etwas über Shakespeare bei Gelegenheit Wilhelm Meisters".

Between 1789 and 1795 Schlegel had established for himself a reputation as critic, philologist and aestheticist. It is not surprising, then, that Schiller, recognizing these attainments should have invited Schlegel to come to Jena to work with him in an attempt to stimulate the literary output of Germany.

Having schooled himself in Shakespeare in the original, being thoroughly familiar with the virtues and shortcomings of the Wieland and Eschenburg translations, possessing as a Romanticist a keen appreciation for the intricate structure, the richness of the Shakespearean world and the variety of poetic form contained in the Shakespearean drama, Schlegel was naturally attracted to Goethe's treatment of Hamlet in the "Lehrjahre", and he seized the opportunity by way of some remarks on Wilhelm Meister to announce his intention of attempting to translate Shakespeare according to the original completeness and form.

The essay under consideration is not a characteristic piece of writing of Schlegel. Usually his discussions are direct, well-organized and clear. This one contains obscure ideas, not to say anything of the complicated phrasing, especially in his attempts to set forth the value of criticism and to justify the treatment of Hamlet by Goethe. However, there can be detected



an underlying content of appreciation and adoration of Shakespeare.

The opening of his discussion reveals a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction that an enthusiastic and more penetrating study of Shakespeare has been undertaken in Germany. He thinks that Goethe's novel furnishes unusual charm for the lover of the theater, of dramatic poetry and also literary art in general. The Hamlet element is not an episode, but an intricate part of the main action and Goethe's treatment of it is praiseworthy because it arouses the imagination and occupies the intellect. The applause which Shakespeare's plays receive from the hero and the sincerity with which he analyses the character of Hamlet, the seriousness with which he performs the Hamlet role, render the work a monument to the "greatest dramatic poet" and a pleasing interpretation of him.

Appreciative as Schlegel is of Goethe's contribution he nevertheless reveals cautious opposition to the Goethe revision of Hamlet and certainly open opposition to revisions, commentaries, and depreciations of Shakespearean art in general. Thus, he dismisses with a considerable degree of irony such disgraceful calumny as Jonson, Pope, and Gottsched were wont to pour upon Shakespeare. Likewise does he criticise Warburton's commentaries and Voltaire's imitations, to say nothing of the latter's letter to the French Academy. Even the best criticism is not desirable, because the true enjoyment of noble intellectual works must precede criticism, although the dissection and explanation of them helps to put those who do not seize the inner spirit in touch with it.

But what about the interpretations and revisions made by a true poet? A great artist such as Goethe is apt to return not so much a true analysis as a poetic expression of what he, with marvelous intellect and lively imagination sees and feels. Schlegel says concerning a poet's interpretation, "Es ist ein Blick, ein wunderbarer Blick in die Seelen, vor dem sich das Unsichtbare enthüllt — verbunden mit der Gabe, die vermöge einer so ausserordentlichen Sehkraft gesammelten Bilder wiederum auf die Oberfläche des geistigen Auges



zurücksenden und sie ändern darin wie in einem klaren Spiegel erscheinen lassen zu können." (Schlegels Werke vol.7 p.27). Thus, his idea is that Goethe may have gone beyond the bounds of Shakespeare's real intention in his depiction of Hamlet.

Schlegel next admits of a difference between Shakespeare to be read and enjoyed from a mere poetic standpoint and Shakespeare as suited to the stage. Here he reveals himself as a tolerant critic of the subject.

"Hamlet" like "Faust" is a thought drama; both are dramas in which problems constantly arise; plunging the reader or spectator into a state of meditation in his desire to solve them. Schlegel, a true romanticist, says of Shakespeare, "Da er so reich an tiefliegenden und feinen Schönheiten ist, die bei dem schnellen Fortgange und unter den unvermeidlichen Zerstreuungen einer öffentlichen Vorstellung leicht verloren gehen, und um ganz gefühlt zu werden, die ruhigste Sammlung des einsamen Lesers erfordern, so mögen die eigensinnigen Leute (worunter ich bekennen muss mit zu gehören) die ihren Dichter durchaus so verlangen, wie er ist, sich damit zufrieden stellen, dass ihnen der Original-Kodex nicht genommen werden soll oder kann." (Werke vol.7 p.34)

Concerning the revision of Hamlet he remarks further, "manche Bewunderer Shakespeares werden Wilhelm Meister dafür lieb haben, dass er sich so ernstlich gegen eine Verstümmelung des Stücks sträubt, dass er am Ende nur der gebieterischen Konvenienz nachgibt und die Umarbeitung selbst übernimmt um grösseren Uebeln vorzubeugen." (Werke vol.7 p.33). The "Bewunderer" is clearly August Wilhelm himself. In connection with this thought he throws out a hint as to his conception of dramatic structure when he says, "Bei dem Gleichnis mit einem Baume, das er (Goethe) gebraucht, möchte man immer noch zugeben, dass Zweige weggeschnitten, andere eingepflegt werden könnten, ohne den freien königlichen Wuchs zu entstellen, und die Spur der Schere sichtbar werden zu lassen. Wie aber wenn ein dramatisches Gedicht dieser Art noch mehr Aehnlichkeit mit höhern Organisationsformen hätte, an denen zuweilen die angeborene Misgestalt eines



einzigem Glüdes nicht geheilt werden kann, ohne dem Ganzen ans Leben zu kommen?" (Ibid) The danger, then, of revisions is that there is a possibility of injuring the artistic and organic whole. In this respect Schlegel takes a unique stand, for no one had, up to this time, made any opposition to the ruthless mutilations to which the Shakespearean drama had been exposed, as no lesser artists than Garrick in England and Schroeder in Germany felt no compunction about making the most distorted alterations. However, Schlegel is not ready to impose his ideas boldly upon the public. The actor, he claims, has certain ideals and so the poet must meet him halfway. Especially does this idea hold true regarding Goethe's revisions, for if we are to keep on presenting Shakespeare's plays in modified form, then let us have the kind a real poet can make. "Eine solche Bearbeitung", he says, "würde durch ihren Wert alle künftigen überflüssig und durch ihr Ansehen verdächtig machen. Das niemand mehr Beruf haben kann, als der Schöpfer des Götz von Berlichingen, des Faust, des Egmont, leuchtet von selbst ein." (Werke vol.7 p.35).

Feeling, as Schlegel does, that the Shakespearean drama represents the most complete and highest form of literary art, he realizes that the German public can never fully appreciate him without having access to his works in a true and artistic translation.

In a truly generous fashion Schlegel praises the translations of Wieland (1762-1766) and those of Eschenburg (1776-86). He appreciates the difficulties with which these pioneers were confronted. These prose translations, though inadequate and incomplete, nevertheless were factors in bringing out the talents of the best actors, and the stage adaptations of these plays like those of Schroeder after all contributed in establishing a love for Shakespeare in Germany. He speaks of Lessing as, "dieser rüstige Feind der Vorurteile", not only because he fought the destitute French drama, but also because he pointed out the merits of Shakespeare and showed how the Germans could get access to the great dramatist through the Wieland-Eschenburg translations.





Schlegel kindly remembers "Emilie Galotti" as a drama which helped awaken the stage-loving public to a susceptibility for Shakespearean art. "Götz," too, receives due applause as a pioneer in ushering in the spirit of Shakespearean freedom and finally he is mindful of the influence of Herder in opposing the rules of the conventional drama. This entire development Schlegel enjoys reviewing, for it contributed in preparing the German literary public not only to appreciate his efforts, but also to popularize Shakespeare.

Schlegel has no doubt but that Shakespeare will become wholly an acquisition of Germany, for he says, that nowhere has Shakespeare, in translation or in the original been read so much, studied so deeply, loved so warmly and admired so intelligently as in Germany and this he feels is no passing fad. (Werke vol.7 p.38) The reason for it is not that the Germans have accommodated themselves to Shakespearean form, but because the characters of his dramas have so much in common with that of the Germans. Hence the pessimistic tone that rings in Herder's words when he says, "Glücklich, dass ich noch im Ablaufe der Zeit lebte, wo ich ihn begreifen konnte" (Herders Werke vol.5 p.231), has no echo in Schlegel's hopeful message, "Die Sonne kann zuweilen durch Nebel, der Genius durch Vorurteile verdunkelt werden, aber bis etwa aller Sinn für Einfalt und Wahrheit unter uns ausstirbt, werden wir immer mit Liebe zu ihm zurückkehren." (Werke vol.7 p.38). His further insight into the relation of Shakespeare to the German character is expressed in the following words: "Die Ausschweifungen seiner Phantasie und seines Gefühls sind gerade die, denen wir selbst am meisten ausgesetzt sind, und seine eigentümlichen Tugenden gelten einem edlen Deutschen unter allen am höchsten. Ich meine damit sowohl die Tugenden des Dichters als des Menschen, in so fern sich dieser in jenem offenbaren kann; In Shakespeare ist beides auf das innigste verbunden:- er dichtete wie er war. In allem, was aus seiner Seele geflossen, lebt und spricht altväterliche Treuherzigkeit, männliche Gediegenheit, bescheidene Grösse, unver-



liebare heilige Unschuld, göttliche Milde." (Werke vol.7 p.38). With such sincere adoration for a poet it is no wonder that Schlegel entered in the translation of Shakespeare's works with most painstaking labor.

Feeling sure that the result of his task will not be underestimated or unappreciated and that only such translations as he has in mind will more thoroughly naturalize the great dramatist in Germany he expresses his program thus: "Wenn es nun möglich wäre, ihn treu und zugleich poetisch nachzubilden, Schritt vor Schritt, dem Buchstaben des Sinnes zu folgen, und doch einen Teil der unzähligen, unbeschreiblichen Schönheiten, die nicht im Buchstaben liegen, die wie ein geistiger Hauch über ihm schweben zu erhaschen! Es gilt ein Versuch!" (Ibid. p.40) What justifies this daring and venturesome spirit, clothed after all in such modest expression? The subsequent pages of his essay reveal the minute and detailed information that Schlegel possessed concerning the composition and spirit of Shakespeare's plays. He was keen enough to foresee that verse for verse could not be given, that one would have to be satisfied with less literal exactness when it came to rhymed verses, that puns which could not be cleverly translated would have to be omitted, but omitted in such a way as not to be felt, and finally, he would be obliged to use such words and expressions that would carry out the spirit of the content. But he says that one thing must not be overlooked, namely: "Die dramatische Wahrheit müsste überall das erste Augenmerk sein: im Notfall wäre es besser, ihr etwas von dem poetischen Welt aufopfern als umgekehrt." (Werke vol.7 p.63).

In 1827 Schlegel, in publishing a new edition of the essay, adds a few paragraphs on the establishment of the poetic drama on the German stage and the popularity which this form had gained in Germany within the years since he delivered his lectures at Vienna. (1807-1811). For some reason he does not recognize the efforts of Lessing, Goethe and Schiller in this direction,



but rather claims that the taste established for the poetic drama is due to Shakespeare's art. He feels that, although the verse drama has been on the stage for the past thirty years the dramatic actors declaim it with too much "din". Shakespearean verse does not encourage this, for even in the most passionate scenes a certain moderation and suppleness has to be preserved. Finally, since the German public has learned to appreciate this high form of art (due to the translation he made) he feels that it would be time again to emphasize the legitimacy of the use of the prose drama.

## II. "Ueber Shakespeares Romeo und Julia."

In Schlegel's next essay entitled, "Ueber Shakespeares Romeo und Julia" which appeared in Schiller's "Horen" in 1797 he shows definitely by fundamental theory and by actual analysis of the play how Shakespeare works to obtain an artistic production based on inner organic development.

He introduces his essay by showing briefly that Shakespeare's works are not mere dramatic reproductions of a given tale or bit of history. This is what many people claim, but they fail to grasp the significance of his artistic structure. He thinks that an audience would not be satisfied with a mere reproduction of a story. The very fact that "Romeo and Juliet" ever again lures an audience goes to show that the "how" is more important than the "what". Of this art in Shakespeare, Schlegel says, "er hatte feinere, geistigere Begriffe von der dramatischen Kunst, als man gewöhnlich ihm zuzuschreiben geneigt ist." (Werke vol.7 p.70).

Briefly the theory of Shakespeare's method is stated thus: Shakespeare does not slavishly reproduce the material at hand, but he breathes his own soul and life into it by eliminating much that is clumsy and useless for artistic effect, so that finally, his production bears the same relation to the raw material as the description of an object does to the object itself.

Besides this, Shakespeare intersperses many elements and incidents



which are of his own creation. This is especially true of the comical situations.

Finally, Shakespeare's conscious procedure for obtaining artistic form Schlegel expresses in the following passage: "Welche Fülle und Leichtigkeit er gehabt, weiss man: konnte ihm sein Ueberfluss nicht das Wählen und Anordnen erschweren, wenn er das unermessliche Gebiet der Dichtung bloss nach Willkür durchschweifte? Bedurfte er vielleicht einer äusseren Freiheit seines Genius wohlthätig bewusst zu werden? In der entlehnten Fabel baut er immer nach einem höheren, geistigeren Entwurf, worin sich seine Eigentümlichkeit offenbart. Sollte nicht eben die Fremdheit des rohen Stoffes zu manchen Schönheiten Anlass gegeben haben, indem die nur durch gröbere Bande zusammenhängenden Teile durch die Behandlung erst innere Einheit gewannen? Und diese Einheit, wo sie sich mit scheinbaren Widersprüchen beisammen findet, bringt eben jenen wundervollen Geist hervor, dem wir immer neue Geheimnisse ablocken, und nicht müde werden ihn zu ergründen." (Werke vol.7 pp.75-76). This utterance is unique, for it establishes Shakespeare for the first time as an artist as well as a genius.

Schlegel next proceeds to substantiate his statements by a thorough analysis of "Romeo and Juliet". He devotes himself to a faithful, penetrating study of the drama with more subdued enthusiasm, but with equal seriousness as does Wilhelm Meister in his Hamlet study. How different, though, is the result of each work? Goethe, the poet, reading into the drama his own inner soul, returns a splendid artistic production according to his own taste and genius. Schlegel, the critic, steeped in the theory of romantic art seeks an expression of it in Shakespeare and finds it. Goethe confined his analysis largely to the main character, and with his classic tendencies, he recasts the drama, eliminating those elements which in any way distract from the plastic presentation of the hero's actions. To Schlegel nothing is superfluous. To disturb any portion of it would be like removing the keystone from





the arch. His analysis involves all characters and the relation of one to the other is carefully expounded. He makes us realize Shakespeare's power of developing actions interlaced by incidents and occurrences all moving from a central point and penetrating the network of the whole, — every detail subjected to certain limits and finally producing with all its intricacies of action, variety of events and characters, with all its shades of colour in language and form a beautiful and complete work of art.

In this analysis Schlegel points out the structure of the play. He mentions the element of time and indicates that the events in the story spread over a long period of time, but in the drama the tragedy is completed in about six days. He also designates the point of conflict and shows <sup>that</sup> the enmity of the two families, being the axis about which the tragedy turns and from which the variety of occurrences radiate, is the proper initial expository element. He also feels that Shakespeare worked with intention and precision when he introduced Romeo's love for Rosalinde, for this is the second part of the exposition and to Schlegel "the overture for the musical course of events." (Werke vol.7 p.77). He hints at the catastrophe and lastly shows the necessity of the monk's final speech as a proper and well-rounded solution of the drama. Furthermore he justifies the retention of all the elements which had been eliminated by the great actors and attacked by the great critics by showing the relation between Shakespeare's art and nature. Thus, when critics feel ~~that~~ that the characteristics of the nurse have been exaggerated he says, "Freigebigkeit mit Allem, ausser dem was nur bei einem sparsamen Gebrauche wirken kann. Das Verhältniß seiner Kunst zur Natur erfordert nicht jene strenge Sonderung des Zufälligen vom Notwendigen, welche ein unterscheidendes Merkmal der tragischen Poesie der Griechen ausmacht." (Werke vol.7 p.87). This holds true for the elder Capulet, and the secondary characters such as, Peter, the servants or the musicians. He defends also the retention of



Lorenzo's final speech on the ground that the elimination of it would mar the well-rounded structure of the play as intended by the poet. He says of it: "Das Unglück der Liebenden ist nun doch nicht gänzlich verloren, aus dem Hass entsprungen, womit das Stück anhebt, wendet es sich im Kreislauf der Dinge gegen seine Quelle, und verstopft sie." (Werke vol.7 p.90). Moreover, the utterances of the monk and the two servants he says are not only justified as a means, but, "sie haben an sich Werth, indem sie die zerstreuten Eindrücke des Geschehenen auf der traurigen Wahlstatt in einen einfachen Bericht zusammenfassen." (Ibid) Nor should Shakespeare's poise in the weighing of human emotions be disturbed by alterations such as some critics have suggested; as for instance, by permitting Juliet to awaken at the moment when Romeo takes the poison. To this Schlegel says, "Es gibt ein Mass der Erschütterung, über welches hinaus alles Hinzugefügte entweder zur Folter wird, oder von dem schon durchdrungenen Gemüte wirkungslos abgleitet. Niemand zweifelt wohl, dass Shakespeare diese mit angemessener Stärke darzustellen vermochte; aber hier war alles Mildernde willkommen, damit man aus der Wehmut, der man sich willig hingibt, nicht durch allzupeinliche Missklänge aufgeschreckt würde." (Werke vol.7 p.91). With equal discernment Schlegel knows how to defend the mixture of the comical and merry elements with the tragical and pathetic ones. These are not so used because such a condition is actually found in natural life, as Jonson would have it, but because they relieve the situations, give play to fancy and help heighten the color.

### III. The Lectures on Dramatic Art.

August Wilhelm Schlegel's "Lectures on Dramatic Art" delivered in Vienna from 1803 to 1811 treat of the history of dramatic poetry from ancient Greek times down to his own age. Six of these lectures are devoted to Shakespeare. In the last three he classifies Shakespeare's plays into four groups;



namely, - comedies, tragedies, historical plays and immature plays, and then discusses each drama. Inasmuch as Schlegel does not, to any extent, reveal his attitude toward Shakespeare beyond the fact that he seeks through constructive and appreciative criticism to stimulate an interest for Shakespeare in those who do not know him and to review <sup>the plays</sup> for those who care to refresh their memories, this paper will include a discussion of only the first three lectures. In these Schlegel announces in finely elucidated exposition a definition of romantic dramatic art, and, with keen perspective and wholesome generosity he declares Shakespeare to be the greatest exponent of romantic poetry, thereby establishing the historical significance of his art.

August Wilhelm and his brother Friedrich were both thoroughly familiar with classic art and poetry. Their view, then, that romantic poetry is the highest form in all literature is not due to ignorance. August Wilhelm understood perfectly the spirit of Lessing's comparison of Corneille and Shakespeare when this renowned critic said: "Shakespeare kommt den Alten in dem Wesentlichen näher (17. Literatur Brief. Lessings Werke vol.7); likewise did he value Herder's intelligent remark: "Ein Volk soll sich sein Drama nach seiner Geschichte, nach Zeitgeist, Sitten, Meinungen, Sprache, Nationvorurteilen, Traditionen, Liebhabereien, wenn auch aus Fastnachts- und Marionettenspiel erfinden." (Herders Werke vol.5 p.217); and it was his understanding of these ideas, together with his own knowledge and appreciation of the classic spirit which formed the basis upon which he derived his theory of romantic art and poetry.

If, according to these ideas, the character of each age is the resultant of its history, its customs, language, traditions etc., then the art which the age produces must be a reflection of its civilization if it be true art. Hence, Greek art, being serene, harmonious and restrained, is the expression of its Hellenic, plastic ideal and therefore genuine. What about the age of Shakespeare? Here is a complex civilization; its ideals, traditions,



history, spirit, prejudices, preferences are so intricate and rich that it could never be confined to calm, plastic lines. This epoch must be compared to a painting, depicting a rich landscape, reflecting all shades of form and color. It must be built upon perspective, and the charm of such form Schlegel says, "liegt darin, dass sie an körperlichen Gegenständen sichtbar macht, was am wenigsten körperlich ist — Licht und Luft." (Werke vol. 6, p. 162). This being true, the art reflecting a complex civilization must be picturesque and not plastic. On the basis of this distinction Schlegel forms his estimate of the romantic drama. He says, "es fasst das ganze bunte Schauspiel desselben mit allen Umgebungen zusammen, und indem es nur das zufällig neben einander Befindliche abzubilden scheint, befriedigt es die unbewussten Forderungen der Phantasie, vertieft uns in Betrachtungen über die unaussprechliche Bedeutung des durch Anordnung, Nähe und Ferne, Kolorit und Beleuchtung harmonisch gewordenen Scheins, und leiht gleichsam der Aussicht eine Seele." (Werke vol. 6 p. 163).

When Jonson charges Shakespeare with ignorance, when Pope asserts that nobody wrote better or worse than Shakespeare, and later critics accuse him of bombastic use of language, of buffoonery and formlessness, it simply means that these critics have missed the spirit of the age of Shakespeare and therefore of romantic poetry. (Werke vol. 6 p. 167). If Shakespeare's own contemporaries and countrymen have misunderstood their greatest genius to this extent, then, Schlegel says, it is no wonder that foreigners, especially the French should consider Shakespeare's dramas, "als abenteuerliche Ungeheuer, die nur zu einer wüsten, barbarischen Zeit von einem beinahe verbrannten Gehirn ans Licht gefördert werden mochten." (Werke vol. 6 p. 168)

To set aright this distorted idea Schlegel points out that the romantic drama is built up on artistic structure which likewise conforms to the character of the age. He asserts that genius is a prerequisite for true art, but that the work of a genius is not without form. "Der dichterische Geist,





he says, "bedarf allerdings einer Umgrenzung, um sich innerhalb derselben mit schöner Freiheit zu bewegen, wie es alle Völker schon bei der ersten Erfindung des Silbenmasses gefühlt haben; er muss nach Gesetzen, die aus seinem eignen Wesen herfliessen, wirken, wenn seine Kraft nicht ins Leere hinaus verdunsten soll." (Werke vol.6 p.157). The reason why the dramas of Shakespeare are charged with formlessness is because critics in general have been blinded by mechanical form. It is not natural for a romantic drama to assume such structure, as it is a development from within and hence organic in nature. All true forms — whether in literature or in the realms of nature are organic, that is, they are decided by the content of the production. (Ibid).

Schlegel next proceeds to do homage to "the greatest dramatic genius of all times by attempting to place him in the right light for those who do not know him and who have misinterpreted him. He first undertakes to correct the following impression of the poet: "Shakespeare sei ein rohes Genie gewesen und habe blindlings unzusammenhängende Dichtungen auf gut Glück hingeschüttet." (Werke vol.6 p.166). Schlegel says Shakespeare is not a crude genius. His talents, sentiments, influence, social position and popularity both among the common people and at the court, and the recognition of honor he received after his death as revealed by anecdotes, documents, his will and his sonnets at once refute this charge. Next Schlegel uses Shakespeare's works for establishing the mental-culture, intuitive knowledge and universality of the poet. The summary of the knowledge and culture which Schlegel compiles not only shows how thoroughly and deeply he plunged into the study of the poet's life, but it also designates Shakespeare as a representative outgrowth of the civilization which produced him.

However, if people would believe that Shakespeare's works are loose or photographic reproductions of the tales and history which he portrays they do not know them. Schlegel says that Shakespeare's genius was admitted and



also that he was a thinker. It was agreed that he thought deeply about character and passions, about causes of events and human destinies. If this is true he questions whether Shakespeare should leave the structure of his plays to mere chance. (Werke vol.6 p.183). "Formlos zu sein", he says, "darf also den Werken des Genius auf keine Weise gestattet werden, allein es hat damit keine Gefahr." (Werke vol.6 p.157). In another place he explains this last quotation thus: "Die Tätigkeit des Genius ist zwar ihm eine natürliche, und in gewissem Sinne bewusstlose, wovon, also, der, welcher sie ausübt, nicht immer augenblicklich Rechenschaft wird ablegen können; es ist aber keineswegs eine solche, woran die denkende Kraft nicht einen grossen Anteil hätte. Eben die Schnelligkeit und Sicherheit der Geisteswirkung, die höchste Klarheit des Verstandes, macht, dass das Denken beim Dichten nicht als etwas Abgesondertes wahrgenommen wird, nicht als Nachdenken erscheint." (Werke vol.6 p.183) In this connection Schlegel refers his audience to his analysis of "Romeo and Juliet" of 1797 and recapitulates briefly how he had pointed out the necessity of each part of a Shakespearean drama to the whole and the dangers involved in disturbing any part of it. But here he adds that only those elements would he eliminate which have become unintelligible or foreign to the present taste.

Schlegel next shows that Shakespeare is a romanticist by pointing out the universality of his dramas, thus proving that his art is the expression of the complex civilization which bore him. With perspicuity and skill he expounds at length the display of Shakespeare's genius in accomplishing a happy mixture of the comical and the serious, of his dexterity in the use of poetic forms, of his Promethean creation of fanciful elements, his deft revelation of his knowledge of mankind, his magic charm of conjuring up diverse characters, and lastly his masterful skill in depicting character. He refutes all the reproaches that had been made concerning Shakespeare's pathos as not having been weighed; his puns and mirth as being intermingled too profusely with the serious and elevated passages; his tendency to offend one's feelings by



the use of unconcealed descriptions of the most disagreeable moral odiousness. In a sane and sympathetic fashion Schlegel meets these reproaches on the ground that Shakespeare does not take liberties, but that he employs those elements which stimulate the imagination and heighten the color of his poetic production, thus contributing to the beauty and picturesqueness of the play.

The greatest excellency of the Shakespearean drama is found in the skill which the poet uses in grouping characters and in bringing out the influence of one upon the other. "Dies", Schlegel says, "ist der eigentliche Gipfel der dramatischen Charakteristik; denn man kann einen Menschen niemals ganz abgesondert für sich nach seinem wahren Wert beurteilen. man muss ihn in seinem Verhältnis zu andern sehen und hier sind eben die meisten dramatischen Dichter mangelhaft. Shakespeare macht jede seiner Hauptpersonen zu einem Spiegel der übrigen, in welchem wir das entdecken, was uns nicht unmittelbar eröffnet werden konnte." (Werke vol.6 p.197).

Two quotations will further show that Schlegel saw in Shakespeare the realization of the highest demands of human and poetic greatness. Having mentioned him as a Prometheus and a Titan he sums up his adoration thus: "An Kraft ein Halbgott, an Tiefblick ein Prophet, an überschauender Weisheit ein Schutzgeist höherer Art, lässt er sich zu den Menschen herab, als wüßte er nicht um seine Ueberlegenheit, und ist anspruchslos und unbefangen wie ein Kind;" (Werke vol.6 p.197); and finally: "er wuchs seitdem (Anfang des 17ten Jahrhunderts) immer mit dem Fortgange der Zeiten, und wird auch in den folgenden Jahrhunderten, dies sage ich mit grösster Zuversicht voraus, fortfahren gewaltig anzuwachsen, wie eine von den Alpen herunterrollende Schneelawine." (Werke vol.6 pp.164-165).



## LUDWIG TIECK'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SHAKESPEARE.

Tieck's interest in Shakespeare reveals itself through various avenues of effort:- through his tributes to Shakespeare in some of his own dramatic works; his attempt to write a novel or book on Shakespeare; his criticisms on various dramas; his stage criticisms; various letters and conversations; and finally through his supervision of the translations of those plays left undone by August Wilhelm Schlegel and his annotations of the complete translations.

Although the Tieck material on Shakespeare is manifold yet it must be said of it, that, with the exception of his dramatic criticisms it is very much disorganized and changing in character; some of his statements prove inconsistent; but what he has to say is usually interesting even though more entertaining than critical.

Tieck had essentially a fanciful and poetic mind and his earliest interests in Shakespeare found a point of contact with the dreamy, fantastic, weird and startling elements in Shakespeare's plays, such as, those contained in "The Midsummer Night's Dream", "The Tempest", "Hamlet", "Macbeth" and "Julius Caesar". Moreover, like the earlier Storm and Stress writers he first looked upon Shakespeare as being the paramount expression of genius, feeling and nature. In his little one-act play, "Die Sommernacht", written in 1789, in his letters entitled, "Kupferstiche nach der Shakespeare -Galerie in London", and in some of his later critical writings he emphasizes above all the genius of Shakespeare.

In "Die Sommernacht", a graceful and fanciful poetic playlet, Tieck not only imitates the fantastic, dreamy, and fairy-like mood of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream", but also pays a beautiful tribute to the great master's genius, lofty thought, imagination and power of inventing merriment.

Titania, the queen of the fairies bestrews the brow of the slumbering





boy Shakespeare who has lost himself in the depths of the forest, with the fragrance of violets, pronouncing upon him the blessings of imagination, song and fame when she says:

"Entzünde in ihm, Phantasie,  
Die hellste, reinste Flamme, wie sie immer noch  
In eines Menschen Brust gebrannt! O sei  
Der grösste Sänger, den die Vorwelt sah,  
Zu dessen Höhe nach dir Keiner sich  
Erschwingen wird." . . . .

"Sei gross und ahne deine Grösse nicht,  
Sei milde, nimmer schwellle deine Brust  
Verweg'ner Stolz; erfahr' es nimmer, dass  
Du seist der Erste aller Sterblichen!"

(Nachgelassene Schriften)  
(p. 157)

The enchanting drops which Oberon pours on the youth from the calyx of a rare flower add to these blessings those of lofty thoughts and genius, for the king says:

"Der Gedanken höchster Flug durchbreche alles,  
Was dir entgentritt!"

and, " Dein Geist belausche in der Erde Schlünden  
Der Zauberei Geheimnis, hebe sich  
Zum Himmel auf!"

He closes with the following prophecy:

"Die Ewigkeiten wird dein Ruhm durchleben  
Mit immer frischer Jugend, und der späteste Enkel  
Wird dich beneiden, mit Entzücken denken,  
Ich möchte Shakespeare gewesen sein!"

(Nachgelassene Schriften pp. 15-16).

Before dawn breaks Puck fittingly hastens to endow the boy with mirth as he pronounces the following words:

"Ich schenke eine heitre Laune dir,  
Die Macht, so oft du willst aus jeder Brust  
Den schwarzen Kummer zu entfernen."

Shakespeare, unconscious of the sweet invocations awakens refreshed and cries:

"Ein jeder Atemzug in mir ist Wonne,



Ein jedes Glied von meinem Körper ist Gefühl!  
Woher? Woher?"

(Nachgelassene Schriften p.18).

His letters "Kupferstiche nach der Shakespear-Gallerie in London" appeared in 1793. In the introduction to his discussion of these engravings Tieck gives indirectly a passing appreciation of his reverence for Shakespeare as a genius when he says, "Die Kunstwerke machen einen Tempel Shakespeares aus, wo seinem Genie auf die grösste und ehrenvollste Art gehuldigt wird; die Nation wird hier an den Mann erinnert, auf den sie mit Recht stolz ist." (Kritische Schriften vol. 1 PP.3-4) Aside from this quotation the material contains nothing bearing directly upon his attitude toward Shakespeare beyond the fact that his remarks of the various scenes represented reveal his thorough acquaintance with Shakespeare's art.

In 1793 there also appeared Tieck's essay entitled: "Shakespeares Behandlung des Wunderbaren." Of this article Wernaer says, "He essayed to explain the ways and means used by the English poet in lulling the reader's senses to sleep in enmeshing them into the webs of the spirit world." (Wernaer p.258). The treatise reveals Tieck's deep interest in the mysterious and supernatural element. He tries to explain how Shakespeare produces this element in "Midsummer Night's Dream" and "The Tempest", "Macbeth" and "Hamlet" and affirms<sup>1)</sup> with Lessing that Shakespeare is inimitable in his power to produce illusion.

After this time Tieck becomes identified with the founders of the Romantic School and sees not only the genius in Shakespeare, but also the artist. In his poetic drama "Zerbino" written from 1796 to 1798 Tieck takes this position for the first time. He cleverly introduces the great poet into one of the scenes of his play. The setting is that of a wild mountainous

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1) Cf. Lessing. Hamburgische Dramaturgie. 11tes Stück. ". . . der dramatische Dichter ist kein Geschichtschreiber . . . . die historische Wahrheit ist nicht sein Zweck, sondern nur das Mittel zum Zwecke; er will uns täuschen, und durch die Täuschung rühren . . . Wir glauben keine Gespenster mehr? . . . [das] kann und darf den dramatischen Dichter nicht im geringsten abhalten, Gebrauch davon zu machen . . . . im Theater müssen wir glauben, was er will".



landscape cut by springs and raging torrents and haunted by the spirits of nature. In the midst of this setting Zerbino sees the wonderful form of Shakespeare enter, — thoughtful, calm of gait, and in appearance human yet divine. Zerbino conjectures him to be one not mortal. To Shakespeare's query, "Wie denkt Ihr denn von mir?" Zerbino answers, "Nun, man hält Dich also für einen wilden erhabenen Geist, der bloss die Natur studiert hat, sich ganz seiner Furie und Begeisterung überlässt und nun darauf los dichtet, was es gibt, gut und schlecht, erhaben und gemeine durcheinander." To this Shakespeare answers, "Grüsse deine Bekannten von mir und sag' ihnen, dass sie sich irren . . . . Verkündige ihnen, dass die Kunst immer meine Göttin war, die ich anbete." (Schriften vol.10 pp.297-298).

One of the most interesting tasks which Tieck set for himself was his attempt to write a book on Shakespeare. It was to be a novel in letter form. Unfortunately, his intentions were better than his power to carry them out, but it is interesting to follow the various attempts he made in this connection. In one place he announces that he intends to reproduce Shakespeare's poetic character in his letters. He expects to intermingle poems, allegory, verse and stories. According to his words it will be "eine freiere Form einer Beurteilung, oder eigentlicher die Verwandlung einer Uniform in eine Form." (Kritische Schriften vol.1. p.148). This was said in 1800 when he wrote his "Briefe über Shakespeare".

Tieck left three plans for this work, — two dated 1800. The third, called "Uebersicht des Inhalts in allgemeinen Umrissen", Köpke places about 1817, probably shortly before his journey to England. The outlines show not only how vast and comprehensive this book was intended to be, but also that Tieck meant to work according to Herder's idea of evolutionary history.

The first outline included a plan to develop treatises on the various English editions of Shakespeare and the different German translations; on the



three unities, which was to lead to a discussion of Shakespeare's tragedies; the elements of genius, nature, illusion and time; a comparison of the modern world with that of the past; caricatures in general and those of Shakespeare in particular; passions, effects and poetic mood; Lessing as a dramatist who wrote with "Besonnenheit"; Goethe as a true poet; and finally a classification of Shakespeare's plays. This classification he gives as follows: "Lustspiele, Schauspiele, Märchen, Satiren, Historische Schauspiele, Bürgerliche Trauerspiele, und Trauerspiele." Under each heading he places the title of the dramas according to the classification. Here is one instance of Tieck's inconsistency, for in 1840-1853 in his conversations with Köpke he says, "Ich habe Shakespeare stets in zwei Klassen geteilt, die wohl von einander zu scheiden sind, da der Dichter in beiden keineswegs in derselben Weise auftritt, nämlich in historische und mystische." (Köpke: Lud.Tieck 2.Teil p.215).

It can easily be seen from the above outline that the book actually would not contain much Shakespeare material, but his aim evidently was, by contrast, to give Shakespeare the highest place as a genius and an artist. For instance, in connection with the comparison he was to make of the modern world with that of the past, he says, "ein wunderbarer Geist aber könnte in seine Darstellungen unwillkürlich die hohe Ansicht seiner Nation hineinmischen. Dies ist der Fall mit Shakespeare, ja er hat noch mehr getan. Jedes seiner Kunstwerke liefert uns eine hohe Ansicht der Welt, des Gemeinsamen in den Schicksalen, des Verworrenen und Wiederaufgelösten. Sie sind nicht eng und beschränkt, sie beruhen nicht auf einem Satze, sondern Alles ist die höchste Willkür, die doch dem Dichter dient." (Nachgelassener. Schriften vol.2 p.130).

With reference to nature he says, "Shakespeare ist nicht in diesem Sinne Dichter der Natur. Er sieht die Welt mit seinem weiten, grossen Blicke an, und eine solche idealisierte Welt liefert er." (Ibid).

In contrasting the element of time in the French plays with those of





Shakespeare he says of the latter, "Die Zeit gibt keine Anschauung, in diesen weiten Kunstwerken kann sie nicht verlangt werden." (Nachgelassene Schriften vol.2 p.131).

The second outline plans a discussion on style; on consistency in judgment of matters of taste; the rise of the theatre; illusion; and the English stage. In this plan he mentions Shakespeare only once and then in connection with a discussion of "Manier". He says that all dramatic artists since Shakespeare, with the exception of Goethe, were "Manneristen". The genuine artist, though, ought to let himself be torn away by the spirit of his material in order to bring forth a work of distinct character. Such power, he says, Shakespeare had. (Nachgelassene Schriften vol.2 pp.136-137).

The third outline shows that Tieck intended to divide his work on Shakespeare into three parts according to the three periods of the author's life. This promised by far to be the most comprehensive treatment of Shakespeare and a book<sup>of</sup> valuable and well-organized content. In the first period, which was to be an introduction to the work, he intended to describe the spirit of the mediaeval age and give a characterization of Shakespeare's early works. This period he chose to call the "great, epic, heroic and truly exalted" age. The second was to contrast Ben Jonson's characteristics with those of Shakespeare. Here he intended to discuss "Richard II.", "Henry IV.", "Henry V.", "As You Like It", "Twelfth Night", "Love's Labor Lost", "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and "The Two Gentlemen of Verona". This period Tieck characterizes as the romantic period of Shakespeare. He says, "Die Historie wird ihm grosse Komödie, er entdeckt das romantische Lustspiel und vollendet es." (Nachgelassene Schriften vol.2 pp.145-147). In the third period he plans to discuss the remaining plays and show through them that Shakespeare was a "Menschenkenner" and a complete artist.

In 1800 and in 1820 Tieck attempts to carry out these plans. The



first work he calls, "Briefe über Shakespeare"; the second, "Das Buch über Shakespeare". Both productions are fragmentary, rambling and entertaining. In both he pronounces Shakespeare an artist; but neither work seems to follow any of the outlines above discussed.

The "Briefe über Shakespeare" consists of two letters, the first extending over thirty-two pages, the second over only eight. Tieck says he wrote these during a period of convalescence. The congenial, chattering style which he uses lends these letters a peculiar charm. He seeks to justify his views concerning the great English poet and indirectly to attack those of his opponents. Haym says that this contribution is the most Tieck-like. (P.764).

In this unorganized material he shows first of all a warm and intimate companionship for Shakespeare such as no other German writer up to that time had revealed. He finds friendship and love in nature as he goes out into the country to convalesce and says, "ich möchte sagen, dass vielleicht Shakespeare dieselbe Empfindung gehabt hat, als er umgekehrt aus der Landschaft nach London kam, nicht mehr sein Leben selbst in kühnen Mutwillen verscherzte, sondern die Kunst als sein Gebiet erfand, um in ihr den erhabenen Scherz fortzusetzen, den er vorher aus Irrtum an etwas nicht Dauerndes geknüpft hatte." (Kritische Schriften vol.1 pp.135-136). In another place he calls Shakespeare his "old favorite" and speaks of this feeling for him as a weakness. He anticipates that his friend might consider his love for Shakespeare an illness, but he wonders why it cannot better be considered as "Gesundheit". His further favoritism for the poet is shown by the fact that he left all books and occupations behind him, — only Shakespeare accompanied him for he finds in reading and re-reading him ever new fullness and always fresh life in his poems. (Kritische Schriften vol.1 p. 141). This irresistible attraction for Shakespeare's spirit he further expresses when he says, "Das Centrum meiner Liebe und Erkenntnis ist Shakespeares Geist, auf den ich alles unwillkürlich und oft, ohne dass



ich es weiss, beziehe, alles was ich erfahre und lerne, hat Zusammenhang mit ihm, meine Ideen so wie die Natur, alles erklärt ihn und er erklärt die andern Wesen, und so studiere ich ihn unaufhörlich." (Ibid). And again he says with a great degree of confidence, "Ich kann mit aller Bescheidenheit antworten, dass ich gewiss überzeugt bin, dass noch niemand so in ihm die ganze Kunst gefunden und sich daher so befriedigt gefühlt hat." (Kritische Schriften vol.1 p.159).

Secondly Tieck points out with pride that English critics of his time do not understand Shakespeare as well as he does; and that many a valuable word had been uttered for the great poet in Germany; as, for instance, in Herder's "Blättern von deutscher Art und Kunst", in "Wilhelm Meister", in Schlegel's essay on "Romeo und Julia", and in the splendid translations of Schlegel.

Thirdly, as in Zerbino, he emphasizes the art in Shakespeare's plays. He now feels that one does not say enough for Shakespeare by calling him a mere genius and to his friend he writes, "Meinst du es aber so, dass Mangel an der Form, Kunstlosigkeit, Gemeinheit und was ihr dem noch hinzufügen wollt, das sei was Shakespeare von seiner rehen Zeit geerbt habe, so bist du gänzlich im Irrtum, denn die Idee der Einheit und Bildung eines Kunstwerkes kann nicht mit den Zeiten wachsen, sondern sie muss ursprünglich in der Seele des Künstlers liegen, oder es ist kein Künstler, diese Vollendung ist seine Seele, alles übrige ist nur Hülle und Gewand." (Kritische Schriften vol.1 p.150). Again he says, "Der Mittelpunkt lag in ihm, er brauchte nur die Aussenlinien zu suchen, die das Bild zu einem Gemälde machten." (p.152). In this connection where he takes such a definite stand as to <sup>the</sup> art in Shakespeare's work it is interesting to note that a contradiction of this idea seems to be expressed when in 1849-1853 he says to Köpke, "Shakespeare selbst war sich der ganzen Gewalt seines Genius gewiss nicht bewusst, und eben darum, weil er still und absichtslos dichtete, weil er nichts anders konnte, war er so gross. Seine Entwicklung ist offenbar eine sehr normale gewesen; von schwächeren Anfängen



ist er zum grossartigen, ja zum Kolossalen fortgeschritten." (Köpke Lud.Tieck p.214).

Another point of importance that he makes in these letters is that he rightly assigns to Shakespeare the distinction of being the creator of the English stage. He describes the conditions in which Shakespeare found the stage and how he awakened the dramatic spirit of his country. He points out how Ben Jonson followed an opposite trend, and calls Jonson a product of his time and a thorough Englishman, but Shakespeare he says is neither. His contemporaries also do not say what he is, but rather what he is not, and this Tieck considers complimentary, for it makes the poet stand out as a unique and independent artist. (Kritische Schriften vol.1 p.183).

There is little to say about "Das Buch über Shakespeare". It is extremely inadequate as to Shakespearean material. In fact, in the two chapters that he succeeds in writing, only the first one contains casual tributes, such as referring to the poet as his "Liebling" and mentioning him as a true artist (Nachgelassene Schriften II.). In the second chapter he does not even mention the great dramatist.

At various times in his life Tieck contributed critical writings on Shakespeare. These appear in two forms. First, he writes occasional commentaries on some of Shakespeare's dramas and secondly, he contributes valuable material in his dramatic criticisms.

His commentaries embrace the following: "Bruchstück eines Commentars zu Richard II." (1795), "Lady Macbeth" (1825), and "Ueber Hamlets Monolog" (1826). Of these only the last named contains anything pertaining to this discussion, but here he pays the poet a high tribute when he says, "So hat man die wunderbare Empfindung, dass der grösste dramatische Dichter, oder der grösste Genius überhaupt, sich etwas näher an die Reihe der gewöhnlichen





Sterblichen schliesst. Es war also nicht nur Ueberfülle eines ungezähmten Genius, die ihn um eine ganze Kopflänge alle andern überragen liess, sondern zugleich Ueberlegung, ruhige Betrachtung, und Fleiss. Darum sind seine <sup>1)</sup> Aenderungen und Ueberarbeitungen so lehrreich wie seine Werke selbst." (Kritische Schriften vol.3 pp.297-298).

Beginning with 1817 Tieck devotes a great deal of attention to a study of the presentation of Shakespeare's plays not only in Germany but also in England. His wonderful talent for recitation and his thorough familiarity with all of Shakespeare's plays naturally enhanced his importance as stage critic, a position which he held in Dresden after 1825.

His dramatic criticisms are valuable contributions, for they are tangible and systematic discussions and show how keenly alert he was in seeking to have Shakespeare presented without alterations. They may be divided into two groups; namely his criticisms of the plays which he saw enacted in London and those which he witnessed on the German stage.

In 1817 Tieck saw eleven Shakespearean performances in London. His criticism of these reveals that he made an especial study of the spirit with which the actors studied and interpreted the master dramatist, directing his observations toward the liberties which the actors took in presenting the play. In this respect his attitude coincides with that of Schlegel. He laments the contractions and changes of "Cymbeline" mainly because the intelligibility of the work is interfered with and the thought which the poet intends to convey has to suffer thereby. And so he feels that his longing to see Drury Lane Theatre had been fulfilled but not satisfied. He is convinced that Schroeder and Fleck in Germany had done more toward preserving the true spirit of Shakespeare than the actors of England. Concerning this performance he

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1) In connection with Hamlet's monologue he discussed the various editions of it and mentioned those of "The Merry Wives of Windsor", and "Henry V." (Kritische Schriften vol.3 pp.293-298).



cleverly remarks:

"Muss einmal Shakespeare verkürzt und auseinandergeschnitten werden, so denke der sogenannte Bearbeiter wenigstens wie Brutus vom Caesar:

Lasst Opferer uns sein, nicht Schlächter,  
Zerlegen lasst uns ihn, ein Mahl für Götter,  
Nicht ihn zerhauen." (Kritische Schriften vol.4 p.322).

In the performance of "HenryVIII." he finds John Kemble in the role of Cardinal Wolsey a master performer because he fulfills so truly the imagination of the poet, but he is dissatisfied with Kemble's brother in the role of Cromwell because he recited a speech belonging to another character. He says of such liberties: "Man hält es wohl für wichtiger, dass ein vorzüglicher Schauspieler diese Worte richtig und schön vorträgt, als den Dichter und die Wahrheit zu verletzen." (Kritische Schriften vol.4 p.322).

Another time Kemble offends him by interspersing a comical situation in a grave scene. Tieck cannot understand why a great actor who reveres Shakespeare does not use more consideration for the poet's art. He feels that the actor, like Shakespeare, does this to break the tragic tone of the scene, but that the former fails to accomplish his end cleverly. Shakespeare, in his artistic fashion, knows how to relieve a tragic scene at the proper moment.

And of "Coriolanus" he says, "Ich musste wieder beklagen, dass man das Stück so unbarmherzig weggestrichen hatte." (Kritische Schriften vol.4 p.338).

After seeing "Richard III." he says, "nicht nur unverantwortliche Auslassungen, sondern auch klägliche Zusätze entstellen das Werk des grossen Dichters." (Kritische Schriften vol.4 p.348). Similar criticism is made of "Hamlet" and "Macbeth". In his remarks concerning the performance of the latter he becomes very sarcastic: "Gewiss", he writes, "wenn ganz unerfahrene Kinder, die nie ein Theater gesehen hätten, diese Scene anordnen müssten, sie könnten es nicht schlimmer verfehlen. Kleinigkeiten! wird mancher denken,



Sie sind es aber nicht, wenn durch sie das grosse Werk eines Dichters geradezu entstellt und albern gemacht wird." (Kritische Schriften vol.4 p.357).

Tieck's "Dramaturgische Blätter" (1826) contain criticisms of Shakespeare on the German stage. These include "Romeo and Juliet", "King Lear", "Hamlet", "Julius Caesar", and "Othello". Later, in 1843, he reviews a performance of "Midsummer Night's Dream". His discussions of "Caesar" and "Othello" contribute nothing of value for this paper. The same may be said of his essay on "Hamlet," entitled, "Bemerkungen über einige Charaktere in 'Hamlet' und über die Art wie diese auf der Bühne dargestellt werden könnten," except that in this writing he engages in minute analysis of the play in some respects reminding one of Goethe's Hamlet analysis in that it reveals serious and deep study and an unusual interpretation of the drama. It differs from Goethe's as the title suggests, in that he seeks to bring out the importance of other characters besides Hamlet's. He naturally comments on Schroeder's revisions of it, but otherwise does not reveal any particular general attitude toward Shakespeare.

In "Lear" he again engages in a synopsis-like commentary but really gives most space to a discussion of performances in general as presented by the great German actors from 1770 to 1790. He gives these actors as much credit as possible for improving the standard of the German stage, but says, "Ich gebe zu, wenn Shakespeare in unsern Tagen leben könnte, und er sich die offenbar schlechtere Einrichtung des Theaters gefallen lassen müsste, er seine Stücke anders stellen würde, dass er selbst Vieles zu seinem Vortheile würde zu gebrauchen wissen; aber seine grossen Meisterstücke, wie wir sie jetzt einmal besitzen, werden gestört oder verdorben, wenn die Zufälligkeit oder die Mängel unserer Bühnen uns so wichtig und unerlässlich sind, dass wir ihnen die geistigen Schönheiten und den Sinn der Gedichte opfern." (Kritische Schriften vol.3 p.232).



His critique of "Romeo und Julia", a letter to Fr. von Raumer, contains an excellent appreciation of the performance of this play in Schlegel's translation. Being successfully rendered, according to the Romanticists' ideas, in its entirety, Tieck naturally is prompted to refer to Goethe's revision of it. He says, "Es ist überhaupt nur einem so grossen Dichter, wie jenem, erlaubt und zu vergeben, wenn er das Meisterwerk eines Andern grausam behandelt, wie mit diesem Trauerspiel wirklich geschehen ist, in welchem man vom Original nur wenig wiederfindet, und wo selbst das, was noch da steht, durch die sonderbaren Umänderungen in einem ganz andern Lichte erscheint, und seine wahre Bedeutung verloren hat." (Kritische Schriften vol.3 p.175).

A performance of "Midsummer Night's Dream" given in 1843 called forth appreciative comment because it was an attempt made to imitate the old theatre of the poet. Tieck expresses his satisfaction thus, "so war denn ein Werk des grossen Dichters neu errungen worden, welches selbst von den Engländern vernachlässigt ist und nur selten und mit bedeutenden Abänderungen gegeben wird." (Kritische Schriften vol.4 p.376).





## CONCLUSION.

When Goethe wrote in "Dichtung und Wahrheit" that the greatness of Shakespeare had been acknowledged by the Germans more than by his own people, and that distinguished men had labored to show the great poet's talents in the most favorable light,<sup>1)</sup> — he summed up in a way the persistent and earnest efforts put forth by both himself and the Romanticists to secure a permanent appreciation of Shakespeare's art in Germany.

Both Goethe and the Romanticists found in Shakespeare a Promethean and Titanic type, occupying a place in the world of literary art which invited and claimed their adoration. Each one used his own individual talent to convey to the literary public of Germany the superiority of Shakespeare's poetic genius. Goethe, however, being himself a creative genius of the highest type, would naturally look upon another unusual genius in a way which would differ from that of a literary critic such as August Wilhelm Schlegel, or a lesser poetic talent such as Tieck. The fact, too, that Goethe underwent such an extraordinary development would cause him to change more decidedly in his attitude toward Shakespeare at different periods of his life.

Schlegel maintained his place as a critic of first rank, — he thought clearly and formulated his theories definitely, and so when he discovered that

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1) In the preface of "The Youth of Shakespeare" embodied in his larger work "Shakespeare and his Times" first published in 1817, Nathan Drake (1766-1836) wrote the following appreciation:

"Thus, in his national proper apparelling, goeth he [Shakespeare] so famously abroad, but in a foreign garb he is scarce less revered, for the principal nations of Europe have strove to make his excellence as familiar with them as was possible, and have turned his English into as eloquent language of their own as they had at their commandment. By these means, the Spaniard, the Italian, the Frenchman, and the German, have got him into their friendly acquaintance. But of these only the Germans can be said either to know him thoroughly, or appreciate him with proper affection. These excellent worthy persons do love him with all their hearts, study him so intently, they will not let the slightest of his manifold graces to escape without the full measure of admiration it meriteth, and do so much make of him the general talk, as though all Germany were but Stratford-upon-Avon, and her sole glory were no other than William Shakespeare."



the genius and art of Shakespeare answered the demands of the romantic theory of poetry he beheld in Shakespeare a Titan whom he adored and worshipped consistently throughout his life

From his early youth Tieck enjoyed a thorough familiarity with Shakespeare's works. This caused him to look upon Shakespeare as an ennobling companion and to feel a certain warm intimacy for the poet such as was hardly apparent in Goethe and Schlegel. But, as he, like Goethe, passed through several periods of development, his attitude also changed. At first he saw in Shakespeare only an expression of Storm and Stress elements, especially those of genius and of nature. Later, as he became identified with the early Romantics he was fundamentally and consistently with Schlegel in his idea of Shakespeare's dramatic and poetic art and in his insistence that the "greatest dramatist" be given to the Germans in his entirety. The fact that he occasionally made contradictory remarks was probably due to his peculiar, fantastic nature.

In many general respects, though, it may be said that the Romantics took the same attitude toward Shakespeare that Goethe did. They show that they agree as to the great poet's genius, they feel his individuality, his freedom from restraint, and recognize the historical significance of his art and his universality.

Up to 1808 Goethe was more or less intimately associated with Schlegel. His intercourse with Tieck was not so frequent, yet he kept in touch with him and held him in high esteem even to his old age, corresponding with him and encouraging him in his literary efforts. Respect and admiration for Goethe caused the Romantics to overlook or make light of any difference of opinion which he expressed up to 1796 with regard to the structure of the Shakespearean play. Thus, we see, as Goethe's enthusiasm for Shakespeare cooled and he began to analyse the Hamlet character and revise the play, that Schlegel's differences



of opinion were expressed with caution and respect. But Goethe's early unconscious feeling for organic development from within, as revealed in literature and architecture as well as in nature gradually became a conscious feeling, thus coinciding with the ideas of the Romanticists. This is shown most clearly in "Wilhelm Meister" when the hero feels that the harmony of the organic whole would be disturbed if alterations or omissions were made and so it is only natural that Schlegel should approve of Wilhelm's aversion for alterations and his hesitancy in finally making them.

By 1809 the Romanticists had definitely established their theory of art and had announced it as being the highest form of literary development. Goethe, on the other hand, had become a devout classicist. The divergent ideas which both held as to the highest form of dramatic art necessarily caused them to differ in opinion as to the greatness of Shakespeare as a dramatic artist. Added to this, Goethe, as director of the Weimar Theatre naturally examined the Shakespearean plays as to their adaptability for his stage. As has been pointed out in connection with the discussion on "Wilhelm Meister", Goethe passed through a period of struggle before he himself felt justified in altering the structure of "Hamlet", and not until 1811-1812 when he tried to prepare "Romeo and Juliet" for the Weimar stage did he feel that a decidedly plastic presentation of the drama would be justifiable. It was not only his reverence for classic art, but also his desire to adapt the play to the conditions and demands of the theatre which he had to direct that caused him to undertake and urge such bold revisions. This desire, then, was not altogether egoistic; for he felt that it would be better to produce the play successfully in revised form than to fail in the production of it as Shakespeare would have had it played.

This attempt of Goethe naturally called forth opposition from the Romanticists whose conviction of the perfection of the structure of the



Shakespearean drama aroused in them the feeling that it must be given to the public unaltered. Revisions, no matter whether great or insignificant, they felt, would mar the beauty and perfection of such high art. Hence all their efforts, whether by way of critical analysis, translations or stage productions were directed towards realizing their ideal. The fact that they did succeed in putting the Germans in touch with Shakespeare as he is is indeed one of the most praiseworthy of all their accomplishments.

When Goethe's friendship for the Romantics cooled and their uncompromising attitude called forth his critical essay, "Shakespeare und kein Ende", he put Shakespeare in a class by himself, by showing that Shakespeare's art combined both ancient and romantic elements. Moreover, his impatient opposition to the Romantics' ideals prompted him to disagree with them as to the production of the Shakespearean play in its entirety. But he did not disagree with them as to the high place which Shakespeare held as a true poet. Goethe, being a great poetic genius possessed all the power of thought and all the vividness of imagination necessary to enjoy Shakespeare to the utmost by reading him, and when he advocated what he conceived to be the ideal way of enjoying Shakespeare, namely, by listening with closed eyes to a skillful reader, — he no doubt unconsciously had in mind Tieck reading one of the translations by Schlegel. (For that Tieck excelled in this art, Goethe himself mentions in his conversations with Eckermann.)

Finally, when we realize the constant efforts put forth by the Romantics to introduce Shakespeare in his entirety, whether as a poet in general or as a dramatist, and find that they succeeded, it is a source of satisfaction to find that Goethe, too, in later years agreed with them and looked upon such performances, if only approximately successful, as doing no harm and as being a means of reviving a great past age.





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